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March 20, 2009

Dear Members of Congress,

As Members of Campus Compact and leaders in higher education, we wish to express our support of the Serve America Act (S 277) introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy and Senator Orrin Hatch. We feel strongly that investment in community service, service-learning, social innovation and the non-profit sector is a winning strategy at this time.

Campus Compact is a 23 year-old coalition of over 1100 college and university presidents that promote the public purposes of higher education through the creation of civically engaged campuses. We have been involved in the evolution of the Serve America Act, serving as one of the original members of the organizing committee for ServiceNation.

We support the participation of Americans of all ages in innovative service programs that leverage federal funding wisely and bring much-needed relief to our country's most economically vulnerable communities. The Serve America Act strengthens existing national service programs as well as creating new initiatives. These programs include: four new volunteer corps, each focusing on a critical issue facing our nation; designation of up to 30 institutions of higher education as "Campuses of Service," based on their records of student engagement in service and service-learning; and the creation of Youth Engagement Zones to support service-learning partnerships between higher education institutions and local education agencies.

As President Obama said in his speech before Congress on February 24th, the Serve America Act will "encourage a renewed spirit of national service for this and future generations." We ask you to support the Serve America Act, and make it possible for millions of Americans to contribute to the rebuilding of our country in the spirit of service.

Sincerely,

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